

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. 09/688,482

Amdt. dated June 4, 2004

Reply to Final Rejection dated April 5, 2004

REMARKS

Before the present amendment, Claims 1-9 were pending, with Claim 1 being in independent form and Claims 10-17 having been previously withdrawn. In the present amendment, Claims 1-4 have been amended to comply with the Examiner's requirement of form expressly set forth in the April 5, 2004 Final Rejection, Claims 21-32 have been added, and Claims 5 and 8-17 have been cancelled without prejudice. After the present amendment is entered, Claims 1-4, 6-7, and 21-32 will be pending, with Claims 1, 21, and 27 being in independent form. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are requested on the basis of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In ¶5 of the Final Rejection, the Examiner rejected dependent Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as lacking a written description in the specification. Since Claim 8 has been cancelled without prejudice, the rejection is moot.

In ¶7 of the Final Rejection, the Examiner rejected dependent Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner stated that "it is not known if the steps are 'in replacement of' or 'in addition to' the steps in claim 1". In response, new independent Claim 27 has been added, comprising the limitations in the previous versions of Claims 1, 3, and 9. Since Claim 9 has been cancelled and replaced with new independent Claim 27, which is believed to be sufficiently definite, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In ¶12 of the Final Rejection, the Examiner objected to dependent Claims 3-5 as being dependent of a rejected base claim, but also stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitations recited in Claim 5, and Claim 5 has been cancelled. Claims 2-4 have been amended to conform with the changes in amended Claim 1. In addition, independent Claim 21 comprising the limitations recited in the previous versions of Claims 1 and 3 has been added. Newly added Claims 22-26 depend from newly added independent Claim 21 and recite the limitations recited in the previous versions of Claims 2 and 4-7. Lastly, as noted above, independent Claim 27 comprising the limitations of the previous versions of Claims 1, 3, and 9 has been added. Newly added Claims 28-32 depend from newly added independent Claim

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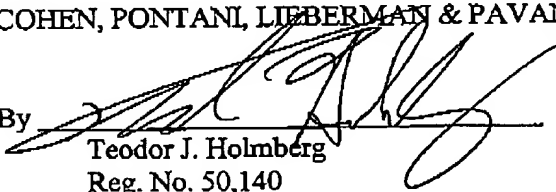
27 and recite the limitations recited in the previous versions of Claims 2 and 4-7.

Based on the statements made by the Examiner in §12 of the Final Rejection, it is believed that all the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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